

Pre-Application Consultation Report

Eastern HVDC Peterhead Converter Station

November 2021



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of Document

1.1.1 Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks Transmission (SSEN Transmission) is applying for Planning Permission in Principle from Aberdeenshire Council under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) for the proposed Eastern HVDC Peterhead Converter Station and associated access tracks and landscaping. Consent is also being sought from the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit (ECU) under Section 37 of The Electricity Act 1989 for construction of a new sealing end tower and associated downloads immediately west of the converter station. The remaining project elements (such as underground cables) fall under the Applicant's permitted development rights (Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992).

1.1.2 The converter station falls within the category of 'National Development' under the Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Development) (Scotland) Regulations 2009 (the Hierarchy Regulations). Therefore, there is a statutory requirement to undertake public consultation in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 (SSI 2013/155).

1.1.3 This Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report documents the consultation process for the project which has been undertaken in accordance with the Hierarchy Regulations and Development Management Procedures prior to submission of the application. The programme of consultation was designed to engage with Aberdeenshire Council, statutory and non-statutory consultees, local communities, landowners and individual residents in order to invite feedback on the proposals.

1.1.4 The PAC Report describes the key responses received and details the actions taken in response to any issues raised.

1.2 Document Structure

1.2.1 This PAC Report is comprised of six parts as follows:

1. Introduction – sets out the purpose of the PAC Report;
2. Proposed Development – outlines the background to the project and provides a description of the key elements;
3. The Consultation Process – describes the framework for consultation and methods which have been employed;
4. Public Responses and Key Issues – summarises the range of responses and key comments and issues arising through the consultation process;
5. Project Responses to Consultations – describes how the comments and issues raised during consultation will be addressed; and
6. Conclusions and Next Steps – provides a summary of the conclusions reached and actions going forward.

1.2.2 The main body of this PAC Report is supported by a series of appendices.

2. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Project Background

- 2.1.1 Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks Transmission (SSEN Transmission), operating under licence as Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission plc (SHE Transmission plc), is a wholly owned subsidiary of the SSE plc group of companies. SSEN Transmission owns and maintains the electricity transmission network across the north of Scotland and holds a license under the Electricity Act 1989 to develop and maintain an efficient, co-ordinated and economical system of electricity transmission.
- 2.1.2 The project is being driven by the requirement to connect an increasing volume of renewable energy generation in the north-east of Scotland to the electricity network, which has necessitated the requirement for significant upgrades to the Transmission Network.
- 2.1.3 SSEN Transmission is developing proposals for a new subsea High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) link between Peterhead and Drax near Selby, North Yorkshire. The project, known as Eastern Link 2 (EL2), will reinforce the electricity transmission system enabling large volumes of renewable energy generated in Scotland to be transmitted to England.
- 2.1.4 The onshore elements of the project at Peterhead, hereafter be referred to as 'the Proposed Development', are the focus of this PAC Report.
- 2.1.5 The Proposed Development encompasses the onshore works at Peterhead, comprising:
- A HVDC converter station and associated access tracks and landscaping;
 - underground cable (UGC) between the Converter Station and the subsea cable landing point at Sandford Bay, and between the Converter Station and the consented 400 kV Peterhead substation which is currently under construction having been granted planning consent from Aberdeenshire Council in 2019;
 - construction of a new cable sealing end compound and terminal tower immediately west of the converter station;
 - removal of two existing 132kV steel lattice towers and associated conductors on the St Fergus – Peterhead overhead line (OHL) between the existing cable sealing end compound and the new sealing end compound;
 - UGC between the new sealing end compound and the existing sealing end compound to replace the removed OHL connection; and
 - temporary works, including a construction compound and horizontal directional drilling (HDD) platforms.

3. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

3.1 Overview

3.1.1 This Section describes the methods employed during the consultation process and provides information on meetings and exhibitions held with stakeholders in order to obtain feedback on the application prior to submission.

3.2 Proposal of Application Notice

3.2.1 A Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) was submitted to Aberdeenshire Council on 10 May 2021, triggering a consultation period. The PAN provided the Council with an outline of the approach to consultation including the timing of the events and a list of the parties that had received a copy of the PAN. Aberdeenshire Council's response outlined what information should be included in the PAC Report. A copy of the PAN and Aberdeenshire Council's response is provided in **Appendix 1**.

3.2.2 The parties served with copy of PAN were:

- Boddam & District Community Council;
- Cruden Community Council;
- Peterhead Community Council;
- Buchan East Community Council;
- Longside & District Community Council;
- Ward 6 Councillors: Stephen Calder, Alan Fakley & Stephen Smith; and
- David Duguid MP & Karen Adam MSP.

3.3 Discussion with Statutory Consultees

3.3.1 SSEN Transmission has been proactive in discussions with Aberdeenshire Council prior to, and during the PAN notice period. This has involved telephone and email communication to discuss the proposals and provide updates about submission timescales.

3.3.2 SSEN Transmission has undertaken consultation with statutory consultees throughout the Environmental Appraisal (EA) process. Further details of these, the responses received and SSEN Transmission's actions are provided in the EA. A summary is provided in **Table 3.1**.

Table 3.1: Summary of Consultation Responses

Consultee	Topic	Matter Raised
Aberdeenshire Council	Terrestrial Ecology	Updated surveys required, along with details of mitigation proposed.
	Ornithology	Updated surveys required. Designated sites - mitigation likely to address potential impacts.
	Landscape and Visual	Welcomed that a landscape and visual assessment (including visualisations) are to be included in the EA. Feedback provided on the locations of the visualisations.
	Hydrology	Data requests relating to water quality data, groundwater level and flow data, licenced water abstraction and discharges, and landfill sites.
Aberdeenshire Council – Archaeology Services	Archaeology	Agreed with scope of proposal and requested that any positives from the removal of towers be considered within the assessment.

Aberdeenshire Council – Environmental Health Officer (EHO)	Noise	Confirmation of assessment methodology.
Historic Environment Scotland (HES)	Cultural Heritage	Agreed with the scope of the assessment.
NatureScot	Ornithology	Satisfied with scope of breeding bird surveys.
Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit (ECU)	Ornithology	The adoption of Species Protection Plans and General Environmental Management Plans including appropriate mitigation would likely reduce or eliminate impacts upon ornithology.
	Landscape and Visual	Welcomed that a landscape and visual assessment (including visualisations) are to be included in the EA.
Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)	Hydrology	Data requests relating to water quality data, groundwater level and flow data, licenced water abstraction and discharges, and landfill sites.

3.4 Public Consultation Events

3.4.1 Due to the global pandemic the requirement to hold public face to face events was withdrawn from the PAN process during the Emergency Period. Government Guidance (Coronavirus (COVID19: Planning Guidance on Pre-Application Consultations for Public Events) was issued which determined that face to face public events should be replaced by meaningful alternatives (e.g. online events), such that the development process could continue to function. Guidance was issued which provided a clear statement on expectations for online consultation, the guidance also extended the time periods for engagement and directed developers to maximise accessibility for all.

3.4.2 SSEN Transmission developed a high-quality online consultation platform based upon an online village hall event concept and enabled real time questions and answers with the project teams. The established platform was adapted specifically for the Eastern HVDC project and was delivered reflecting best practice at this challenging time.

Public Consultation Event 1

3.4.3 The first stage of public consultation was held online on 28 October 2020. Live-chat sessions enabled visitors to engage, ask questions and provide feedback to our project team between 16:00 – 19:00. The exhibitions were accessed through the project webpage with continued access throughout the feedback period allowing visitors to view materials, information and submit comments. The virtual room can be accessed through the following link: <https://ssen-eastern-hvdc.virtualexhibition.info/splash.html>. The virtual room remained open until the feedback period closed on 6 November 2020.

3.4.4 Advertising:

- A maildrop in the local area circulated to 4442 properties within a 2-mile radius of the proposed converter station location. Letters were sent along with copies of the consultation booklet to all properties inviting them to join the online virtual consultation to find out more details. The consultation booklet contained a feedback form which could be completed and sent back. Feedback could also be submitted through the project website: www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/eastern-hvdc-link/.
- Emails were sent to local community councils, affected stakeholders, elected councillors, and MSPs, MPs informing them of the event. All parties were invited to share notice of the event through their own contacts and channels.

3.4.5 The online virtual consultation event attracted visits from 20 individuals. Across the virtual consultation room and the material presented within this room, there were 159-page views. Despite this, no questions were

submitted to the project team during the live event. Feedback, questions, and comments were encouraged via the Community Liaison Manager without restricting these to solely the consultation periods.

- 3.4.6 The public event provided an opportunity for members of the public, local stakeholders and statutory authorities to view information about the project, ask questions and provide feedback. A series of exhibition banners and information brochures were on display at the event to explain the proposals and to provide contact details and comments form for attendees. The information booklet, including contact details, were available to download from the project website. A copy of the consultation booklet is provided in **Appendix 2**.
- 3.4.7 Following the consultation event, SSEN Transmission issued an update on the project website thanking members of the public for attending and advised all material that had been displayed was available for download (www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/eastern-hvdc-link/). The update confirmed the closing date for feedback.
- 3.4.8 The feedback period closed on 6 November 2020. Six written feedback responses (**Appendix 7**) were received via email after the consultation event, along with queries received at the exhibition which were addressed by the SSEN Transmission Community Liaison Manager and the wider project team. These representations are detailed in Section 4 of this report.

Public Consultation Event 2 (PAN Event)

- 3.4.9 The second consultation event (PAN event) was held online on 26 August 2021 over two sessions between 13:00 - 15:00 & 17:00 - 19:00. During these times, live-chat sessions enabled visitors to ask questions and provide feedback to the project team. The exhibitions were accessed through the project webpage with continued access throughout the feedback period allowing visitors to view materials, information and submit comments. The virtual room can be accessed through the following link: <https://ssen-eastern-hvdc-2021.virtualexhibition.info/>. The virtual room remained open until the feedback period closed on 24 September 2021.
- 3.4.10 Advertising:
- A maildrop in the local area circulated to 4442 properties within a 2-mile radius of the proposed convertor station location inviting interested parties to attend virtual consultation event. **Appendix 3**.
 - Five adverts featured in the Press & Journal newspaper on 16, 18, 20, 23 & 25 August 2021. A copy of the advert is provided in **Appendix 4**.
 - The event was promoted via social media, by means of SSEN Transmission Facebook and Twitter feed.
 - Emails (**Appendix 5**) were sent to local community councils, affected stakeholders, elected councillors, MSPs, and MPs informing them of the event. All parties were invited to share notice of the event through their own contacts and channels.
- 3.4.11 The online virtual consultation event attracted visits from 63 individuals. Across the virtual consultation room and the material presented within this room, there were 105 views. Feedback, questions, and comments were encouraged via the Community Liaison Manager without restricting these to solely the consultation periods.
- 3.4.12 The feedback period closed on 24 September 2021. Two completed feedback forms were received via email after the consultation event, along with queries received at the exhibition which were addressed by the SSEN Transmission Community Liaison Manager and the wider project team. These feedback forms as well as questions asked during the live chat session are detailed in Section 4 of this report.
- 3.4.13 Following the consultation event, SSEN Transmission issued an update on the project website thanking members of the public for attending and advised all material that had been displayed was available for

download (www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/eastern-hvdc-link/). The update confirmed the closing date for feedback. Copy of the consultation booklet is provided in **Appendix 6**.

4. PUBLIC RESPONSES AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 Public Consultation 1 - 28 October 2020 – 16:00 – 19:00

- 4.1.1 The online virtual consultation event attracted visits from 20 individuals. Across the virtual consultation room and the material presented within this room, there were 159-page views. Despite this, no questions were submitted to the project team during the live event.
- 4.1.2 At the close of the consultation feedback period on 6 November 2020, 6 written feedback responses had been received via e-mail. The main issues addressed in the written feedback received (**Appendix 7**) centred around the following themes:
- **Visual Concerns** – Concerns were raised about the “East” layout option regarding potential visual impacts on nearby residential properties and road users.
 - **Requirement of the Project** – Further explanation was requested on the requirement of the project along with an explanation of strategic reasons for the transmission to areas of higher demand further south.
 - **Construction Traffic** – Questions were asked on what types and volume of construction traffic the local community could expect to experience, as well as how this would integrate with the existing transport network both during construction and afterwards.
 - **Subsea Cable Route** – Requests were asked for when the subsea cable route would be known and shared publicly, as local fishermen that work in the area would be keen to know of this route and the impact it will have.
- 4.1.3 Each of these have been responded to and addressed by the Community Liaison Manager. The responses to the above are detailed in Section 5 of this report.

4.2 Second Consultation Event (PAN Event) – 26 August 2021 – 13:00 – 15:00 & 17:00 – 19:00

- 4.2.1 The online virtual consultation event attracted visits from 63 individuals. Across the virtual consultation room and the material presented within this room, there were 105 views. During the live chat session, the questions noted in **Table 4.1** were asked.

Table 4.1: Public Queries and SSEN Transmission Responses

Public Query	SSEN Transmission Response
Is the converter station multi-terminal such that future generation developments could be connected or is it solely for the link to Drax?	The HVDC converter station is not designed to be multi-terminal. There may be future multi-terminal HVDC stations on the wider SSEN Transmission network.
Is the Eastern HVDC link designed as Voltage Source Converter (VSC) or Line Commutated Converter (LCC)?	The link is VSC.
When will there be an opportunity to discuss the offshore route and crossing of the NorthConnect route?	There will be a future public consultation event for the offshore elements of the wider project in early 2022.
What is the power rating and transmission voltage of the system?	The proposed link is rated at 525 kV / 2 GW.
It is a monopole or bi-pole HVDC link?	This would be a bi-pole link.
Is an XLPE (Cross-linked polyethylene) cable being utilised for the connection?	The current proposal is for an XLPE, (Cross-linked polyethylene) however the technology team have been investigating an MI (Mass impregnated) option also.
Some operators are considering electrifying their assets from shore, which would involve a new HVDC converter station at a smaller scale than the one proposed. Could this be located near the proposed converter station?	There are a number of future plans in Peterhead so there may be restrictions in terms of land, system capabilities, etc. Operators should contact the SSEN Transmission future connections team for further investigation and clarification.

Feedback Forms

- 4.2.2 A further two feedback forms were submitted by interested parties **Appendix 8**. One of the feedback forms mentioned that the planting of trees, shrubs and landscaping would be very positive for this project. They also mentioned that whilst there is no problem with the project at this current time this could change given that the project will be ongoing until 2029. The Community Liaison Manager responded to this email thanking them for providing the feedback and advised that all feedback would be considered ahead of planning applications being submitted. The other feedback form did not provide any comment but did rate the quality of the consultation event was excellent.

5. HOW THE PROJECT HAS RESPONDED TO CONSULTATIONS AND FEEDBACK TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

5.1 Overview

5.1.1 This Section documents how the project has responded to the responses raised by stakeholders through the consultation process. Based on feedback provided by members of the public on the consultation in October 2020, SSEN Transmission acknowledged the preference for the “West” option and consequently have progressed to application based on this option. SSEN Transmission also presented this as our proposed location as part of the August 2021 (PAN) consultation event.

5.2 Visual Concerns

5.2.1 Concerns were raised with respect to the potential visual impact of the “East” option given its proximity to the main road and residential properties. Feedback was also received that the planting of trees, shrubs and landscaping would be very positive for this project.

5.2.2 In response, the Proposed Development has been sited based on the “West” option. In addition, an outline Landscape Mitigation Plan has been developed as part of the EA submission.

5.3 Requirement of the project

5.3.1 SSEN Transmission advised that in the transition of the UK economy to meet the UK’s legally binding Net Zero targets, significant growth in the generation of renewable and low carbon electricity in Scotland must continue, particularly as we seek to decarbonise the transport industry and how we heat our homes. This new generation will continue to put pressure on the electricity networks that accommodate the north to south power flows between Scotland and England. As a result, it is necessary to identify and progress a timely reinforcement solution that will accommodate the growing volume of critically required renewable generation, safeguarding the continued reliability of the system, and minimising costs to consumers. Economic analysis, completed by the National Grid Electricity System Operator (ESO) through its Network Options Assessment (NOA) process, has consistently recommended the need for significant reinforcement across the Scotland and North of England region. This has led to the establishment of a joint Transmission Operator (TO) project team in early 2017 to progress the development of these reinforcements. A range of options was taken forward for further analysis, by the joint TO project team, from a list of conceptual options that could achieve increased north to south power transfers. These were assessed under criteria such as: technology readiness and suitability; boundary uplift capability; environmental and consent risk; delivery timescales; and capital cost. Based on the recommendations from the ESO economic analysis completed to date and the activities of the joint TO project team, the following options are being taken forward by the TOs:

- Peterhead to Drax HVDC (SSEN Transmission & National Grid Electricity Transmission project); and
- Torness to Hawthorn Pit HVDC (National Grid Electricity Transmission & Scottish Power Transmission project).

5.4 Construction Traffic

5.4.1 SSEN Transmission advised that there is potential for travel disruption during construction, for example, when taking delivery of key plant items or because of increased volumes of traffic on the local road network. Disruption will be minimised and typically controlled through a Traffic Management Plan which will be agreed as part of any consent conditions with Aberdeenshire Council. We aim to ensure that construction traffic uses the roads safely and that any inconvenience to the public is kept to a minimum whilst maintaining a safe environment for the workforce and other road users.

5.5 Subsea Cable Route

5.5.1 SSEN Transmission have appointed fisheries liaison officers who have regularly been in contact with local Peterhead fisheries groups. A marine public consultation event is due to take place in early 2022.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Conclusions

- 6.1.1 The approach to public consultation has ensured that the local community have been given the opportunity to comment on the proposals and provide feedback. This has enabled locally important issues and concerns to be identified and subsequently considered. Consultation feedback has been pivotal in the selection of the Proposed Development site (which reflects the public preference for the “West” option).

APPENDIX 1: PROPOSAL OF APPLICATION NOTICE

PROPOSAL OF APPLICATION NOTICE

Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (Section 35B)
The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland)
Regulations 2013 (Regulations 4 -7)

To be completed for all developments within the
national or major categories of development

Name of Council
Address

Proposed development at [Note 1]

Description of proposal [Note 2]

Notice is hereby given that an application is being made to

[Note 3] Council by [Note 4]

Of [Note 5]

In respect of [Note 6]

To take place on [Note 7]

[Note 8] The following parties have received a copy of this Proposal of Application Notice

[Note 9] For further details contact

on telephone number

And/or at the following address

[Note 10] I certify that I have attached a plan outlining the site

Signed

On behalf of

Date

PROPOSAL OF APPLICATION NOTICE

Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997
Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland)
Regulations 2013

NOTES FOR GUIDANCE

- [Note 1] – Insert postal address or location of proposed development
- [Note 2] – Insert description in general terms of the development to be carried out.
- [Note 3] – Insert Council name.
- [Note 4] – Insert name of applicant and/or agent
- [Note 5] – Insert applicant's and/or agent's postal address
- [Note 6] - Insert form of consultation the prospective applicant proposes to undertake e.g. public meeting
- [Note 7] – Insert date and venue of consultation
- [Note 8] – Insert list of those groups who have been invited to attend
- [Note 9] – Insert details as to how the prospective applicant/agent can be contacted (incl. name, address and tel. no)
- [Note 10] - Attach plan that outlines the location of the proposed development and is sufficient to identify the site

Pre-application Consultation (PAC)

Where PAC is required, the prospective applicant must, under sections 35B(1) and (2) (of the Act), provide to the planning authority a 'Proposal of Application Notice' at least 12 weeks (section 35B(3)) prior to the submission of an application for planning permission. The Proposal of Application Notice must include the information set out in section 35B(4) and in regulation 6, namely:

- i) a description in general terms of the development to be carried out;*
- ii) the postal address of the site at which the development is to be carried out, if available
- iii) a plan showing the outline of the site at which the development is to be carried out and sufficient to identify the site;
- iv) detail as to how the prospective applicant may be contacted and corresponded with; and
- v) an account of what consultation the prospective applicant proposes to undertake, when such consultation is to take place, with whom and what form it will take.

* You should provide an outline of the proposal's characteristics, and the identification of its category (e.g. Major development). Any subsequent application needs to be recognisably linked to what was described in the proposal of application notice.

Submission of an Application after Pre-application Consultation Notice

The submission of the proposal of application notice starts the PAC processing clock. After a minimum of 12 weeks, having carried out the statutory requirements and any additional requirements specified by the planning authority, an applicant can submit the application along with the required written Pre-application Consultation Report. Information in relation to the proposal of application notice must also be placed by the planning authority on the list of applications required under section 36A and regulation 21.

Additional consultation activity (responding to the Proposal of Application Notice)

The applicant is required to indicate in the proposal of application notice what consultation will be undertaken in addition to the statutory minimum. The planning authority must respond within 21 days of receiving the Notice to advise the applicant whether the proposed PAC is satisfactory or if additional notification and consultation above the statutory minimum is required in order to make it binding on the applicant. In doing so, planning authorities are to have regard to the nature, extent and location of the proposed development and to the likely effects, both at and in the vicinity of that location, of its being carried out (section 35B(8)). Additional consultation requirements should be proportionate, specific and reasonable in the circumstances. If there is no response to the proposal of application notice by the planning authority within 21 days, only the statutory minimum PAC activities will be required.

Scottish Ministers expect planning authorities to develop and maintain up to date lists of bodies and interests with whom applicants should consult in particular types of case. These lists should be available to applicants, who can draft proposal of application notices in light of that information. Further advice on planning community engagement activity can be found in Planning Advice Note 81: Community Engagement – Planning With People.

Minimum consultation activity

Consultation with community councils - Under regulation 7 an applicant must consult every community council any part of whose area is within or adjoins the land where the proposed development is situated. This includes community councils in a neighbouring planning authority.

The public event - Regulation 7 also requires the holding of at least one public event for members of the public where they can make comments to the prospective applicant on their proposals. This 'public event' must be advertised at least 7 days in advance in a newspaper circulating in the locality of the proposed development. The advertisement for the public event must include:

- a description of, and the location of, the proposed development;
- details as to where further information may be obtained concerning the proposed development; the date and place of the public event;
- a statement explaining how, and by when, persons wishing to make comments to the prospective applicant relating to the proposal may do so; and
- a statement that comments made to the prospective applicant are not representations to the planning authority. If the applicant submits an application there will be an opportunity to make representations on that application to the planning authority.

Applicants will gain less from poorly attended or unrepresentative PAC events and should ensure that processes are put in place that will allow members of the community to participate meaningfully in any public event. The public event should be reasonably accessible to the public at large, including disabled people. It may be appropriate for the public event to take place over a number of dates, times and places. Applicants should ensure that individuals and community groups can submit written comments in response to the newspaper advertisement.

There is a need to emphasise to communities that the plans presented to them for a proposed planning application may alter in some way before the final proposal is submitted as a planning application to the planning authority. Even after PAC, and once a planning application has been submitted to the planning authority, communities should ensure that any representations they wish to make on the proposal are submitted to that authority as part of the process of considering the planning application.

Any personal data that you have been asked to provide on this form will be held and processed in accordance with Data Protection Legislation.

Our Ref: ENQ/2021/0805
Your Ref:

Ask for: Elizabeth Tully
Tel: 01467 533417
Email: elizabeth.tully@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission PLC
200 Ashgrove Road West
Aberdeen
AB16 5NY

3 June 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

**Proposal of Application Notice for Erection of Electricity Converter Station
Comprising Platform Area, Control Building, Plant Enclosures, Associated Ancillary
and Landscape Works and Road Improvement at Land North Of Buckie Farm,
Peterhead**

I write with reference to the above proposal and the Proposal of Application Notice you submitted in this regard on 13 May 2021.

I can advise you that the proposal constitutes a national development as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Development) (Scotland) Regulations 2008.

You are therefore requested to carry out the consultation specified in the Notice prior to the submission of a planning application and such application must not be submitted before a period of 12 weeks has elapsed from submission of the Proposal of Application Notice.

The application must be accompanied by a pre-application consultation report. The report should be in writing and should include the following information:

- Who has been consulted;
- What steps were taken to comply with the statutory requirements for pre-application consultation with the community and the additional requirements set out above;
- A copy of the advertisement for the public event;
- Details of the material made available at the public event;
- Evidence that steps were taken to explain the nature of the pre- application consultation and that further representation can be made to the planning authority at the application stage;
- Details of what comments were made by the community;
- Details of how the applicant has responded to the comments made, including whether and the extent to which the proposals have changed as a result of the pre-application consultation.

The pre-application report will be assessed against SP=EED® (Successful Planning = Effective Engagement and Delivery) as the Council's preferred framework. Guidance on the application of SP=EED is available on the Council [website](#).

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss the above requirements or have any other queries.

Please note that the content of this letter and the pre-application consultation report will be made available for public inspection on the Planning Register.

Yours faithfully



Head of Planning and Environment Service

APPENDIX 2: PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENT 1 (OCTOBER 2020) CONSULTATION BOOKLET

Eastern HVDC Link

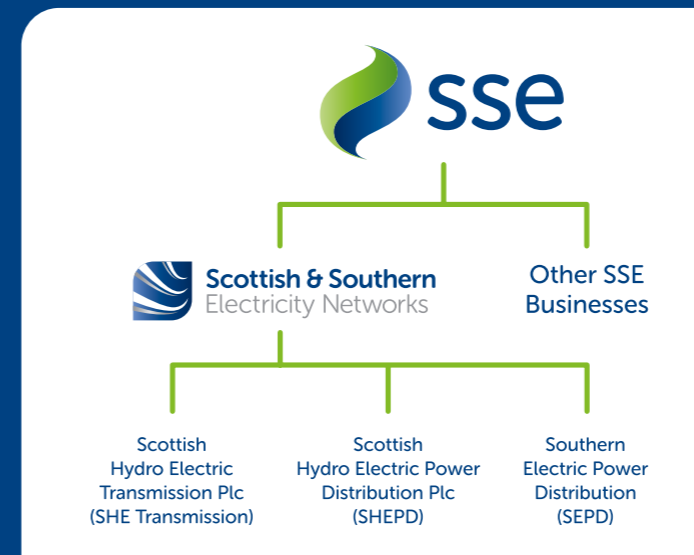
October 2020



Scottish & Southern
Electricity Networks

Who we are

We are Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks, operating under licence as Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission plc (SHE Transmission) for the transmission of electricity in the north of Scotland.

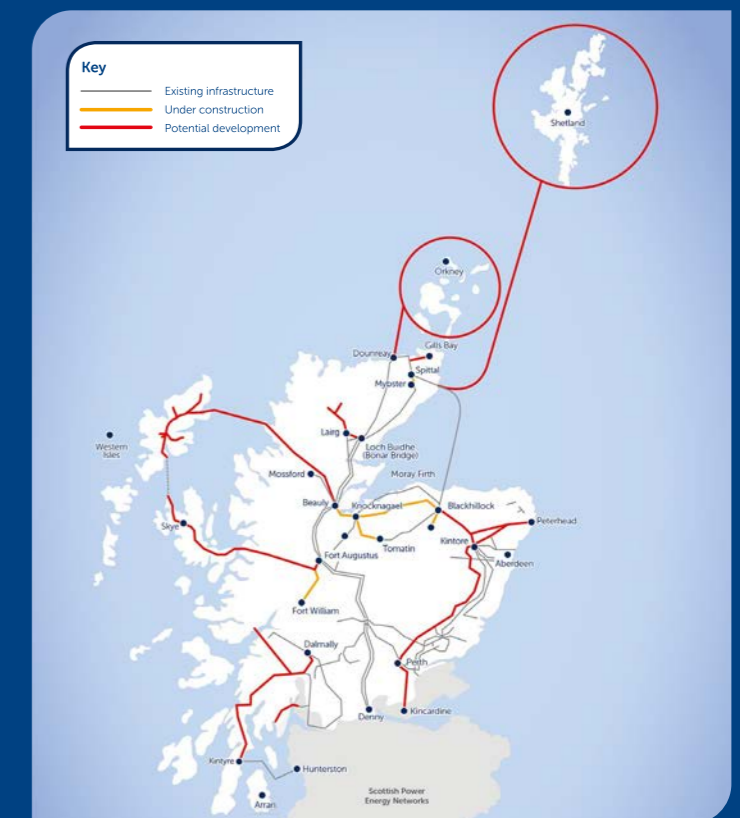


What is the difference between transmission and distribution?

Electricity Transmission is the transportation of electricity from generating plants to where it is required at centres of demand. The Electricity Transmission network, or grid, transports electricity at very high voltages through overhead lines, underground cables and subsea cables. Our transmission network connects large scale generation, primarily renewables, to central and southern Scotland and the rest of Great Britain. It also helps secure supply by providing reliable connection to the wider network of generation plants.

The Electricity Distribution network is connected into the Transmission network but the voltage is lowered by transformers at electricity substations, and the power is then distributed to homes and businesses through overhead lines or underground cables.

Overview of Transmission Projects



In total we maintain about 5,000km of overhead lines and underground cables – easily enough to stretch across the Atlantic from John O’Groats all the way to Boston in the USA.

Our network crosses some of the UK’s most challenging terrain – including circuits that are buried under the seabed, are located over 750m above sea level and up to 250km long.

The landscape and environment that contribute to the challenges we face also give the area a rich resource for renewable energy generation. There is a high demand to connect from new wind, hydro and marine generators which rely on Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks to provide a physical link between the new sources of power and electricity users. Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks is delivering a major programme of investment to ensure that the network is ready to meet the needs of our customers in the future.

Our responsibilities

We have a licence for the transmission of electricity in the north of Scotland and we are closely regulated by the energy regulator Ofgem.

Our licence stipulates that we must develop and maintain an efficient, co-ordinated and economical system of electricity transmission.

Coronavirus: Covid-19 pandemic

As transmission network operator in the north of Scotland, we play a vital role in powering the country, providing a safe and reliable supply of electricity at local, regional and national level, on which the people and organisations whose work is critical to the Coronavirus response depend.

Our employees are working 24/7 to keep the network running, providing an essential service transporting energy to where it is needed. Working in some of the remotest parts of the UK, our employees and supporting contractors need to be able to move around the UK to ensure this work continues.

The Covid-19 outbreak and the necessary social measures introduced by government are unprecedented in recent times and we know that for the customers and the communities we serve, this may lead to concerns about the essential services we all rely on. Since the outbreak we have been collaborating daily with UK and Scottish Governments and local authorities across our network to ensure the continued safe and reliable supply of electricity.

In the absence of specific guidance and with companies understandably expected to use their judgement on what is critical, we are currently deeming critical activity to include work that is essential to the safe and reliable supply of electricity in the medium term, which includes meeting our regulatory obligations until the end of the coming winter.

In conducting this critical work, there will be the need to be active on certain construction sites. We will continue to engage constructively with all relevant authorities, adapting our advice in line with what is clearly an evolving situation.

Whilst we are still present at some sites, all staff that can work remotely are now working from home, actively reducing the number of staff onsite. We are mindful of the current environment and our numbers and activities are much reduced as a consequence of this. For those based at site, increased hygiene and social distancing measures are being adhered to as per Scottish Government guidelines.

In addition to this, we also deem it critical to ensure that we continue to submit planning applications for future developments which are deemed essential to operating the transmission network in a safe and secure manner for the future. It is for this reason that we are continuing with our current timescales regarding the proposed Eastern HVDC Link.

We are committed to continuing quality engagement with all our stakeholders as we all respond to the challenges facing us in the weeks and months ahead. You have our commitment that we will keep you up to date on what this means for our customers, communities and stakeholders.



Project overview

Each year the electricity system operator (National Grid ESO) assesses all proposed networks reinforcements across Great Britain and provides a recommendation on whether these proposals should proceed. This is called the Networks Options Assessment (NOA).

As part of the NOA process, reinforcement proposals have been submitted to National Grid ESO proposing upgrades to the Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission (SHE-Transmission) network on the east coast of Scotland, this is initially through 275kV and 400kV upgrades to the existing onshore overhead line (OHL) network, supplemented by new substations where required.

However, these upgrades are not enough to accommodate all incoming generation currently being forecast.

Therefore, an option for a subsea High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) link from Peterhead into National Grid's transmission ownership area, allowing the electricity to bypass multiple transmission boundaries and alleviate congestion in the north east, has been proposed in addition to the onshore options.

The Eastern HVDC Link was first conceived in 2011 and at this time an extensive site selection study was undertaken; including consultation with statutory consultees, interested bodies and the public to identify a site for a converter station which is required as part of this overall project.

At this time a preferred site was selected near Boddam, Peterhead however, following preparation of a detailed design and completion of a draft Environmental Assessment to support a planning application, the project was put on hold before a planning application was submitted, due to changes in network capacity requirements.

Following the current forecasted increase in source of renewable generation, the Eastern HVDC Link Project has been subject to "Proceed" signals from the Network Options Assessment in the 2018, 2019 and 2020 reports.



Project drivers

The current 'Proceed' signal in the 2018, 2019 and 2020 NOA Reports is due to a vast increase in connections of renewable sources of energy across the north east and east coast of Scotland; there is now a requirement to upgrade the transmission network to cope with this.

More specifically, the requirement for these projects has been driven by Moray East Offshore Windfarm, Moray West Offshore Windfarm and the North Connect HVDC Interconnector, with the first connection due in 2021.

There is also the need to accommodate an increase in generation capacity at Peterhead Power Station, along with incoming connections from the Caithness - Moray HVDC Link as well as accommodating the current generators already connected to the transmission network. Once completed, these reinforcements will allow for the safe, economic and efficient transfer of power to areas of demand further south, as well as strengthening the local transmission network.

Project partners

This project will be managed by three separate Transmission Operator (TO) across Great Britain. SHE-Transmission as the TO for northern Scotland, Scottish Power Transmission plc (SPT) as the TO for the central belt and south of Scotland, and National Grid Electricity Transmission plc ('National Grid') as the TO for England and Wales, are working together to develop the project.

There are currently proposals for two Eastern HVDC Links, the responsibility of these projects is separated between SHE-Transmission, SPT and National Grid.

The link between Peterhead and Drax will be jointly developed by SHE-Transmission and National Grid and this is the link that we will focus on within this brochure. The second Eastern HVDC Link will run from Torness to Hawthorn Pit and will be jointly developed by SPT and National Grid, should you have any questions regarding this project then please do get in touch and we can put you in contact with the relevant colleague from SPT or National Grid.



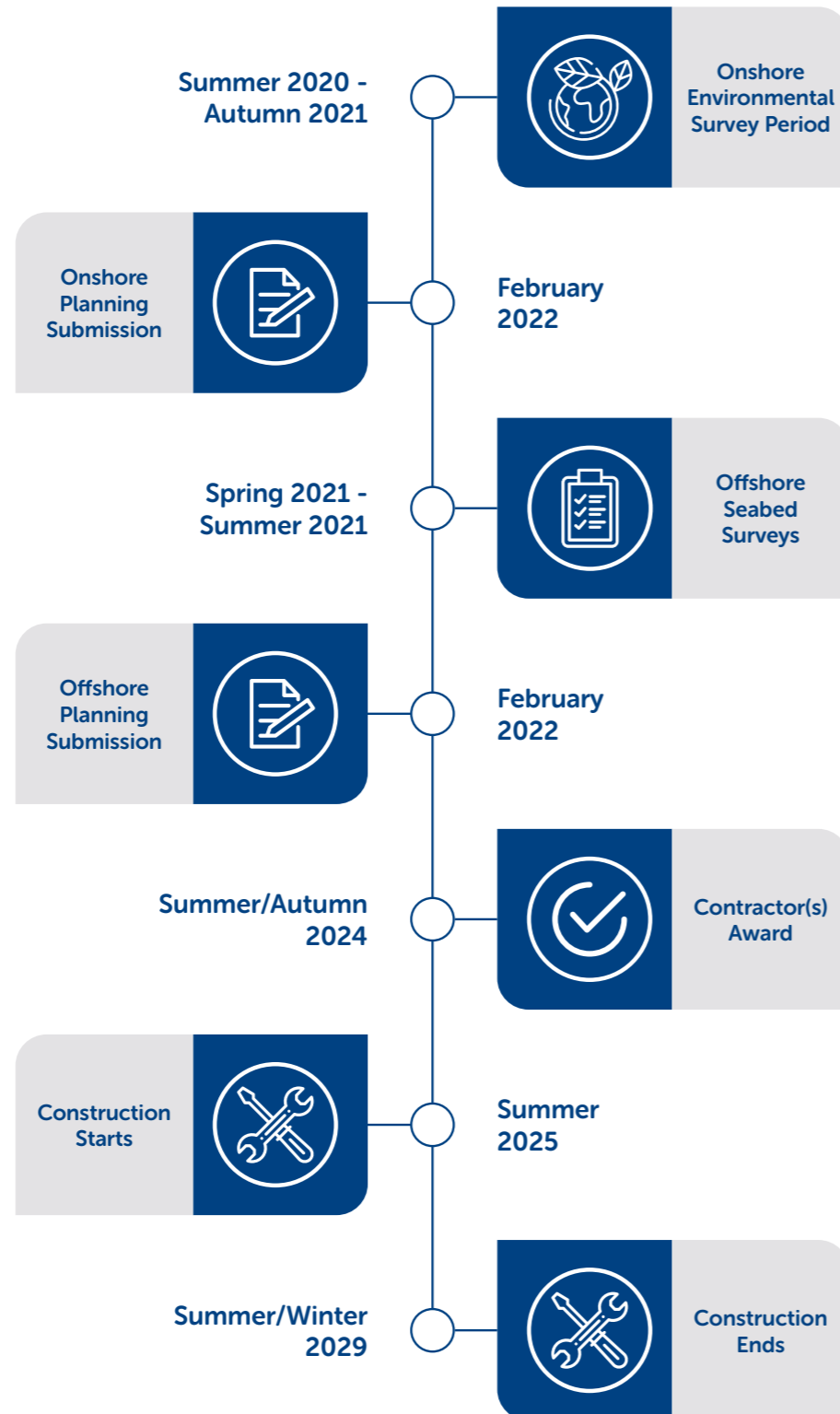
Project details



The link between Peterhead in Aberdeenshire and Drax in North Yorkshire is needed for 2029 and will comprise:

- Approximately 440km of subsea cable between landfall sites in Aberdeenshire and East Riding of Yorkshire.
- Approximately 1km* of onshore underground DC cable from the landfall near Peterhead to a new converter station nearby.
- New converter station in the vicinity of Boddam, Peterhead.
- Approximately 1km of underground AC cables between the new converter station and Peterhead substation.
- Enabling works at the at the new Peterhead substation 400kV substation (construction due to begin Summer 2020).

Project timeline



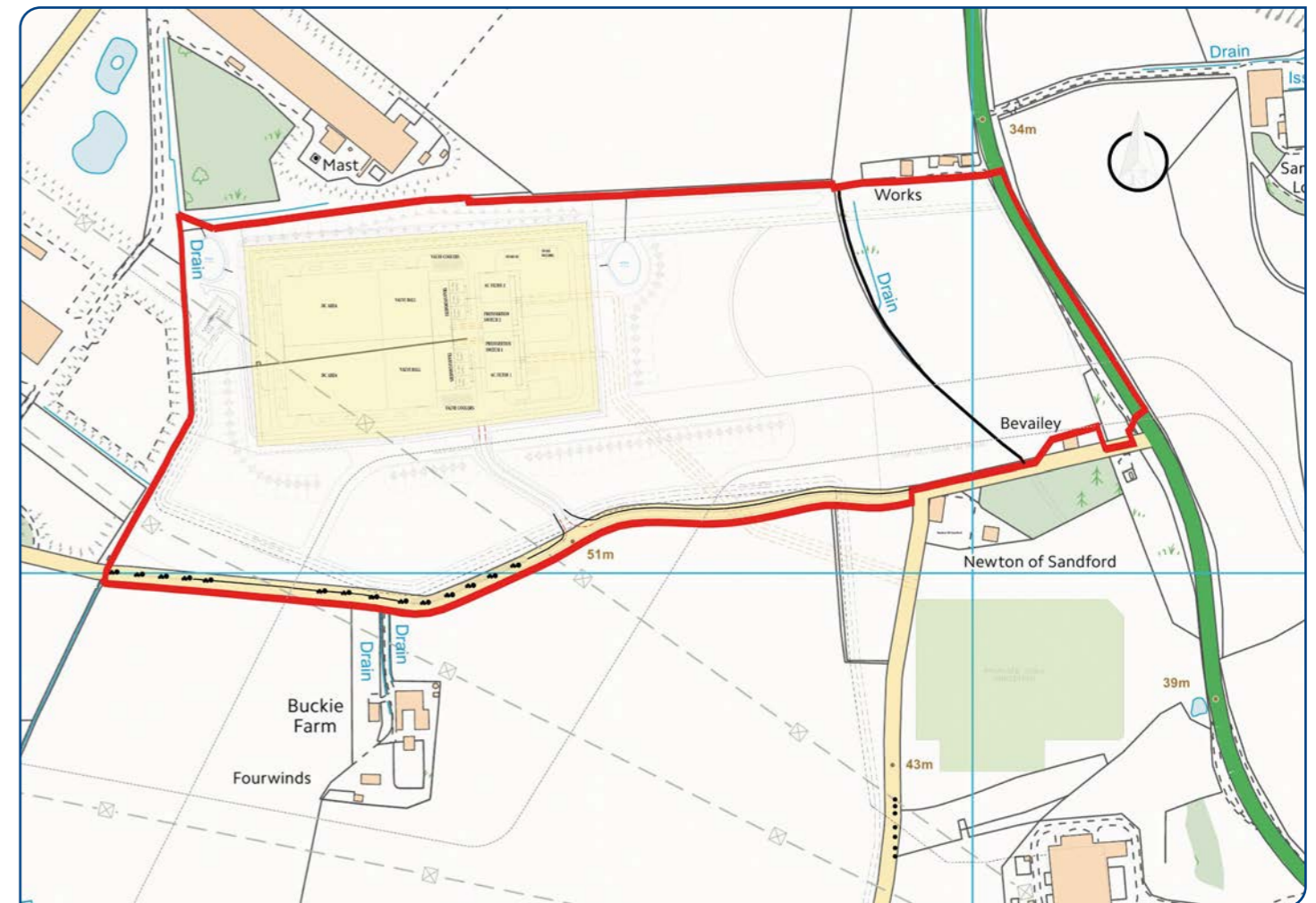
*Distances are approximate and will be refined as the detail of the proposed works is refined

Proposed site

We have undertaken a site selection process which has looked at several potential sites for the proposed new converter station. Our preferred site (as shown below) is in an agricultural field to north west of the consented Peterhead 400 kV substation, we are still considering two layouts within this field.

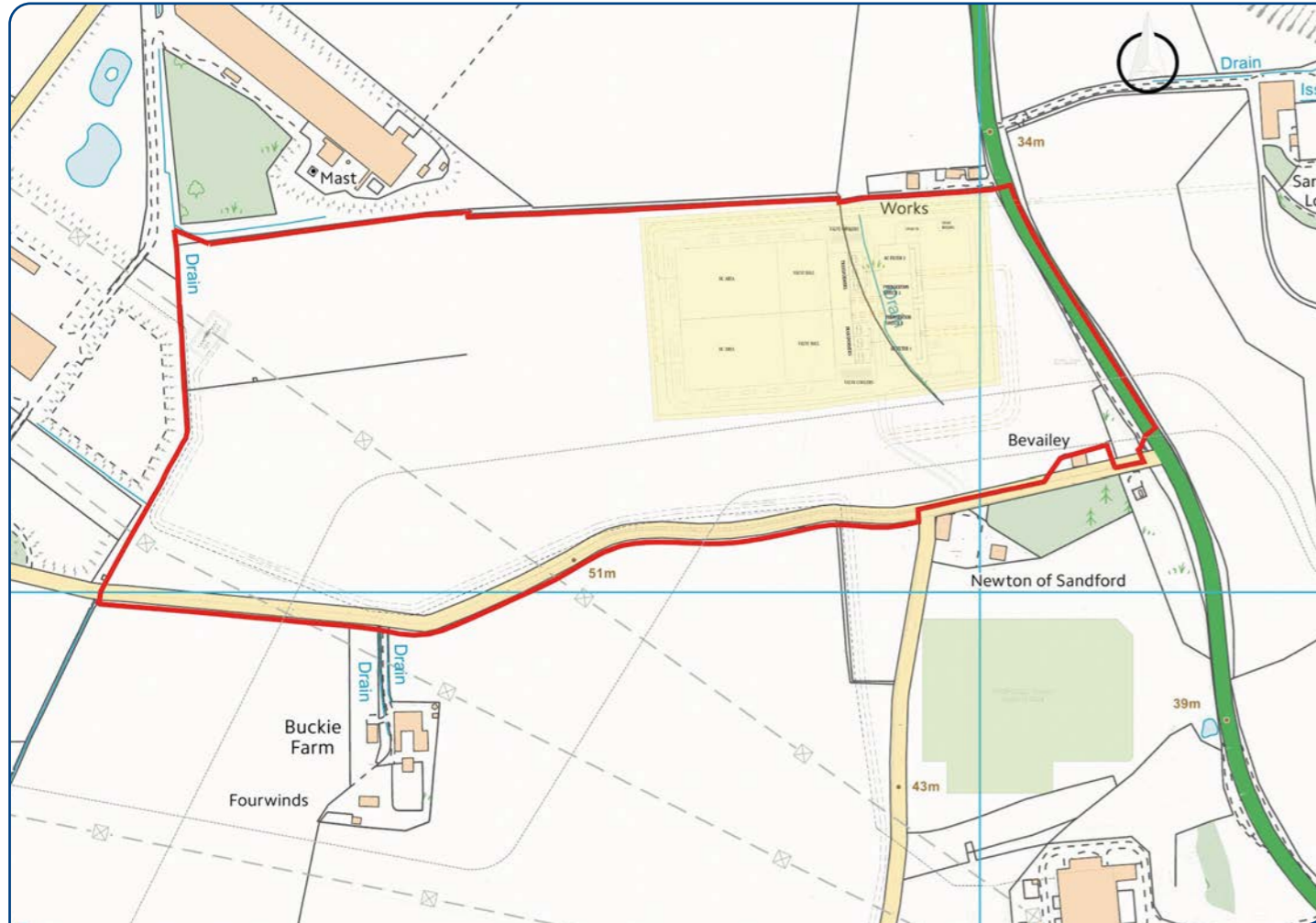
This site was previously selected for development of the converter station when this project looked at in 2011/2012 and following a review of this process and additional site selection surveys, it is still deemed the preferable location.

EHVDC Layout Option 1 - West



Proposed site

EHVDC Layout Option 2 - East



This site has been identified as the preferred option predominantly due to the lower anticipated landscape and visual impacts than the other site options, and its proximity to both the cable landfall point and Peterhead 400 kV substation, resulting in less disturbance associated with the proposed cable routes.

Next Steps

We are currently in the early development stages of the overall project. The Eastern HVDC link is proposed for completion in 2029, with construction beginning in 2025. In the years leading up to this point we will be working with both internal and external stakeholders to ensure that we are considering the views of interested parties and of those whom this project will impact upon.

It is our intention to return to Peterhead in Summer 2021 to provide a further update on our proposed converter station (including more details on exact location and proposed size), results of various surveys that are currently ongoing and more details on the proposed cable route for the subsea HVDC link. However, in the mean time we would welcome all views and opinions from the local community on our proposals.

Notes

What happens now, how do I have my say?

We understand and recognise the value of the feedback provided by members of the public during all engagements and consultations. Without this valuable feedback, the project development team would be unable to progress projects and reach a balanced proposal.


We are keen to receive your views and comments in regards to the following questions:


- How would you rate the overall quality of information presented within the Eastern Link brochure?
- What is your view on our preferred site location for the converter station?
- Do you have any concerns of our preferred site for the converter station?
- How do you feel regarding our proposals to construct a new converter station at Boddam, Peterhead?
- What is your preference for converter station location within the preferred site area? (Layout Option 1 - West or Layout Option 2 - East)
- Has the requirement for the proposal of a new subsea link been Peterhead and Drax adequately explained?
- Do you have any further comments you would like the project team to consider?

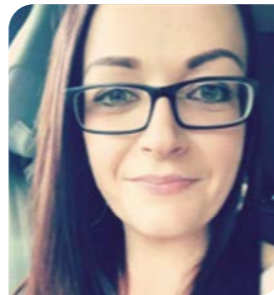
Feedback can be submitted online via the project website or via the project Community Liaison Manager:

Louise Anderson
Community Liaison Manager

 louise.anderson@sse.com

 T: +44(0)1738 457 495
M: +44(0)7384 454 233

 200 Dunkeld Road, Perth,
PH1 3AQ



Additional Information

Information will also be made available via the project web page and social media channels:

Project Website:

www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/eastern-hvdc-link

Find us on Facebook:

SSEN Community

Follow us on Twitter:

@asscommunity

Comments

Your views and comments can be provided to the project team by completing a feedback form or by writing to Louise Anderson, Community Liaison Manager.

We will be seeking feedback from the members of the public and Statutory Bodies 6th November 2020

All received feedback will be assessed and the proposed options adapted where necessary.



Your Comments

Thank you for taking the time to attend this consultation event. In order to record your views and improve the effectiveness of our consultation, please complete this short feedback form.

Please complete in **BLOCK CAPITALS**. (Please tick one box per question only)

Q1 How would you rate the overall quality of information presented within the Eastern HVDC Link brochure?

Excellent Good Average Poor

Q2 How do you feel regarding our proposals to construct a new converter station at Boddam, Peterhead?

Support Neither support nor object Object

Q3 What is your preference for converter station location within the preferred site area?

Layout Option 1 - West Layout Option 2 - East Neither

Q4 What is your view on our preferred site location for the converter station?

Q5 Do you have any concerns of our preferred site for the converter station? If yes, what concerns do you have?



Q6 Has the requirement for the proposal of a new subsea link between Peterhead and Drax adequately explained?

Yes

No

Q7 Do you have any further comments you would like the project team to consider?

Full name

Address

Telephone

Email

If you would like to be kept informed of progress on the project please tick this box.

If you would like your comments to remain anonymous please tick this box.

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this feedback form.
Please submit your completed form by one of the methods below:**

Email: louise.anderson@sse.com

Online: www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/eastern-hvdc-link

Download: Comment forms and all the information from this consultation booklet will also be available to download from the project website.

Any information given on the feedback form can be used and published anonymously as part of Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks consultation report. By completing this feedback form you consent to Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks using feedback for this purpose.

Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks is a trading name of: Scottish and Southern Energy Power Distribution Limited Registered in Scotland No. SC213459; Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission plc Registered in Scotland No. SC213461; Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution plc Registered in Scotland No. SC213460; (all having their Registered Offices at Inveralmond House 200 Dunkeld Road Perth PH1 3AQ); and Southern Electric Power Distribution plc Registered in England & Wales No. 04094290 having its Registered Office at Number One Forbury Place, 43 Forbury Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 3JH which are members of the SSE Group.



APPENDIX 3: PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENT 2 (PAN EVENT) (AUGUST 2021) MAILDROP TO RESIDENTS

Recipient Name
Address
Town
County
Postcode

03 November 2021

Dear Resident

Eastern HVDC Pre Application Virtual Consultation

Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks Transmission (SSEN Transmission), would like to invite you to attend a virtual consultation session to engage and share feedback on our proposals for the new convertor station site and provide further details on the Eastern HVDC link project. In addition, we will also be introducing our wider plans and works for the Peterhead area which are expected to be delivered over the coming years.

The virtual consultation exhibition details are as follows:

Thursday 26th August 2021, between 13:00 – 15:00 and 17:00 – 19:00

The virtual consultation events have been designed to be as interactive as face to face events, allowing presentation of key project information and plans, as well as providing the opportunity to ask questions about the project. Visitors will be able to engage directly with the project team, via a live text chat function, where they can ask any questions they might have about the project and share their feedback on the current proposals.

To find out how you can join the interactive virtual consultation please visit the dedicated project website:

<https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/eastern-hvdc-link/>

If you are unable to make any of the times above, the virtual event consultation booklet will be available to be downloaded from the above website, the booklet contains all the information that will be presented at the virtual consultation.

If you do not have online access and wish a hard copy of the consultation booklet, please contact me on the details below and I can arrange for a booklet to be posted to your home address.

To provide feedback or make any comments on our proposals, please either visit the project website to complete an online feedback form, email me direct or contact me by phone.

Yours faithfully

Dav Lynch
Community Liaison Manager
T: 07918404443
E: dav.s.lynch@sse.com

APPENDIX 4: PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENT 2 (PAN EVENT) (AUGUST 2021) NEWSPAPER / SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERT



Scottish & Southern
Electricity Networks

TRANSMISSION



Virtual
Event

Eastern HVDC Link: Pre-Application Virtual Consultation

SSEN Transmission invites you to come and share your views with us

Following the consultation Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks Transmission (SSEN Transmission) held in October 2020, we are pleased to be holding a further two virtual consultation exhibitions to gain views and feedback on our proposed converter station location and layout.

The virtual consultation events have been designed to be as interactive as face to face events, allowing for presentation of key project information and plans, as well as providing an opportunity to ask questions about the project. Visitors will be able to engage directly with the project team, via a live text chat function, where they can ask any questions they might have about the project and share their feedback on the current proposals.

To find out how you can join the interactive virtual consultation visit the project website or scan the QR code:

www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/eastern-hvdc-link

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our
Community Liaison Manager



Dav Lynch

Community Liaison Manager
200 Dunkeld Road
Perth, PH1 3AQ

Mob: 07918 404443

Email: dav.s.lynych@sse.com

The virtual consultation
event will be taking
place on:

26th of August 2021

1-3pm

5-7pm



@ssencommunity

APPENDIX 5: PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENT 2 (PAN EVENT) (AUGUST 2021) EMAIL TO COMMUNITY COUNCILS / MSPS

Eastern HVDC Virtual Consultation Event - Message (HTML)

File Message Help Tell me what you want to do

Ignore Delete Archive Reply Reply All Forward Meeting IM More

Quick Steps Move Move OneNote Actions Mark Unread Categorize Follow Up Tags Translate Related Select Editing Read Aloud Zoom Share to Teams Report Phishing Insights Reply with Meeting Poll FindTime

Eastern HVDC Virtual Consultation Event

To [Redacted]
Bcc [Redacted]

Eastern HVDC Consultation Event poster.pdf
851 KB

Reply Reply All Forward

Tue 17/08/2021 18:57

Good afternoon,

Hope this finds you well.

Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks Transmission (SSEN Transmission), would like to invite you to attend a virtual consultation session to engage and share feedback on our proposals for the new convertor station site and provide further details on the Eastern HVDC link project. In addition, we will also be introducing our wider plans and works for the Peterhead area which are expected to be delivered over the coming years.

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If you do not have online access and wish a hard copy of the consultation booklet, please contact me on the details below and I can arrange for a booklet to be posted to your home address.

To provide feedback or make any comments on our proposals, please either visit the project website to complete an online feedback form, email me direct or contact me by phone.

Please feel free to share this on any local community pages that you feel would benefit from knowing this information.

Kind regards



APPENDIX 6: PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENT 2 (PAN EVENT) (AUGUST 2021) CONSULTATION BOOKLET

Eastern HVDC Link

Pre-application consultation

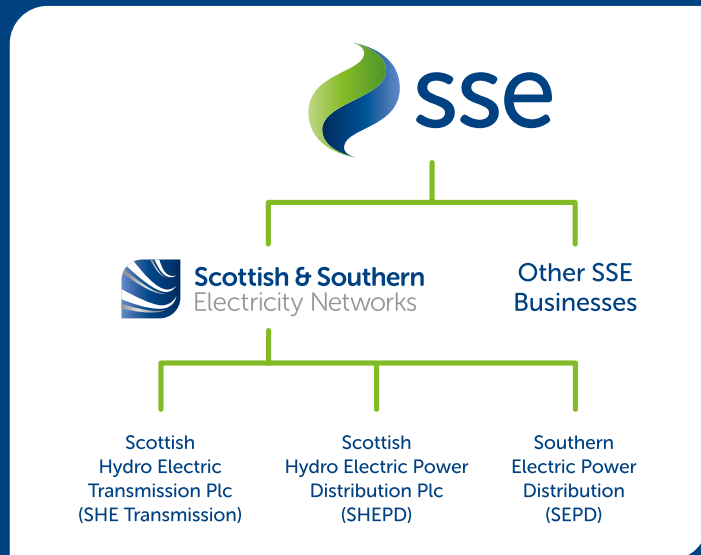


Scottish & Southern
Electricity Networks

TRANSMISSION

Who we are

We are Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks, operating under licence as Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission plc (SHE Transmission) for the transmission of electricity in the north of Scotland.



What is the difference between transmission and distribution?

Electricity Transmission is the transportation of electricity from generating plants to where it is required at centres of demand. The Electricity Transmission network, or grid, transports electricity at very high voltages through overhead lines, underground cables and subsea cables. Our transmission network connects large scale generation, primarily renewables, to central and southern Scotland and the rest of Great Britain. It also helps secure supply by providing reliable connection to the wider network of generation plants.

The Electricity Distribution network is connected into the Transmission network but the voltage is lowered by transformers at electricity substations, and the power is then distributed to homes and businesses through overhead lines or underground cables.

Overview of Transmission Projects

In total we maintain about 5,000km of overhead lines and underground cables – easily enough to stretch across the Atlantic from John O’Groats all the way to Boston in the USA.

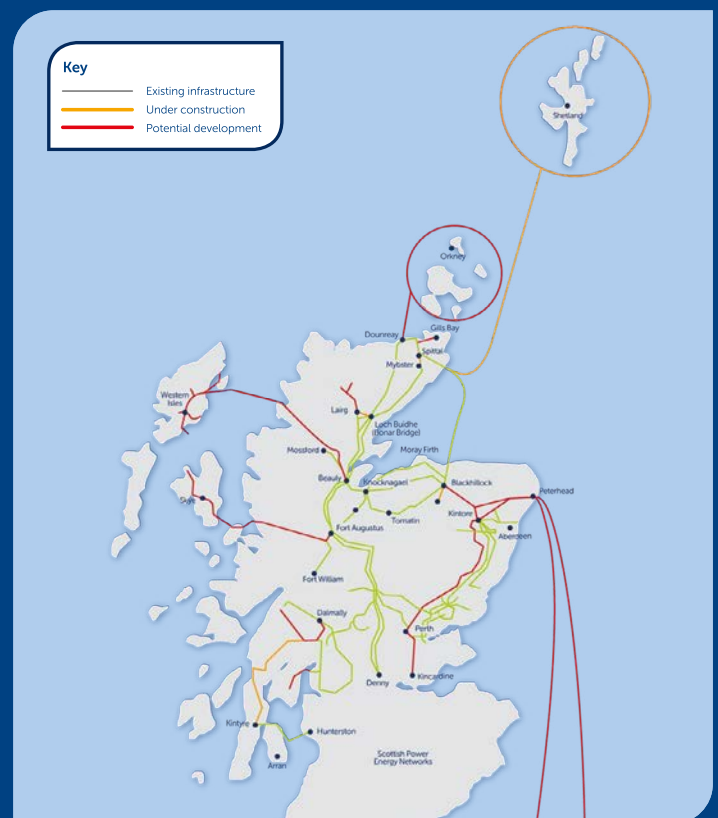
Our network crosses some of the UK’s most challenging terrain – including circuits that are buried under the seabed, are located over 750m above sea level and up to 250km long.

The landscape and environment that contribute to the challenges we face also give the area a rich resource for renewable energy generation. There is a high demand to connect from new wind, hydro and marine generators which rely on Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks to provide a physical link between the new sources of power and electricity users. Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks is delivering a major programme of investment to ensure that the network is ready to meet the needs of our customers in the future.

Our responsibilities

We have a licence for the transmission of electricity in the north of Scotland and we are closely regulated by the energy regulator Ofgem.

Our licence stipulates that we must develop and maintain an efficient, co-ordinated and economical system of electricity transmission.



Project need

Each year the electricity system operator (National Grid ESO) assesses all proposed networks reinforcements across Great Britain and provides a recommendation on whether these proposals should proceed. This is called the Networks Options Assessment (NOA).

As part of the NOA process, reinforcement proposals have been submitted to National Grid ESO proposing upgrades to the Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission (SHE-Transmission) network on the east coast of Scotland, this is initially through 275kV and 400kV upgrades to the existing onshore overhead line (OHL) network, supplemented by new substations where required.

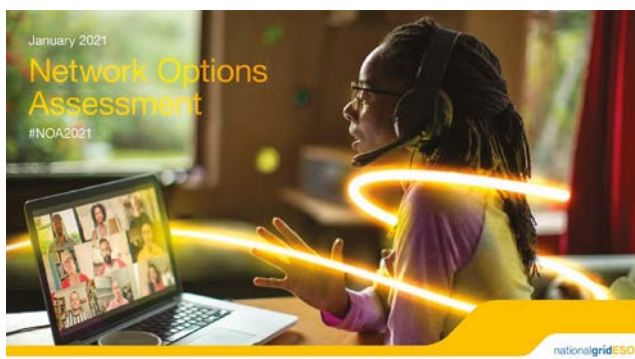
However, these upgrades are not enough to accommodate all incoming generation currently being forecast.

Therefore, an option for a subsea High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) link from Peterhead into National Grid's transmission ownership area, allowing the electricity to bypass multiple transmission boundaries and alleviate congestion in the north east, has been proposed in addition to the onshore options.

The Eastern HVDC Link was first conceived in 2011 and at this time an extensive site selection study was undertaken; including consultation with statutory consultees, interested bodies and the public to identify a site for a converter station which is required as part of this overall project.

At this time a preferred site was selected in Peterhead, which is the same site identified as part of these proposed works, however following preparation of a detailed design and completion of a draft Environmental Assessment to support a planning application, the project was put on hold before a planning application was submitted, due to changes in network capacity requirements.

Following the current forecasted increase in source of renewable generation, the Eastern HVDC Link Project has been subject to "Proceed" signals from the Network Options Assessment in the 2018, 2019 and 2020 reports.



Project drivers

The current 'Proceed' signal in the 2018 to 2021 NOA Reports is due to a vast increase in connections of renewable sources of energy across the north east and east coast of Scotland; there is now a requirement to upgrade the transmission network to cope with this.

More specifically, the requirement for these projects has been driven by Moray East Offshore Windfarm, Moray West Offshore Windfarm and the North Connect HVDC Interconnector, with the first connection due in 2021.

There is also the need to accommodate an increase in generation capacity at Peterhead Power Station, along with incoming connections from the Caithness - Moray HVDC Link as well as accommodating the current generators already connected to the transmission network. Once completed, these reinforcements will allow for the safe, economic and efficient transfer of power to areas of demand further south, as well as strengthening the local transmission network.

Project partners

This project will be managed by three separate Transmission Operator (TO) across Great Britain. SHE-Transmission as the TO for northern Scotland, Scottish Power Transmission plc (SPT) as the TO for the central belt and south of Scotland, and National Grid Electricity Transmission plc ('National Grid') as the TO for England and Wales, are working together to develop the project.

There are currently proposals for two Eastern HVDC Links, the responsibility of these projects is separated between SHE-Transmission, SPT and National Grid.

The link between Peterhead and Selby will be jointly developed by SHE-Transmission and National Grid and this is the link that we will focus on within this brochure. The second Eastern HVDC Link will run from Torness to Hawthorn Pit and will be jointly developed by SPT and National Grid, should you have any questions regarding this project then please do get in touch and we can put you in contact with the relevant colleague from SPT or National Grid.



SP TRANSMISSION

nationalgrid

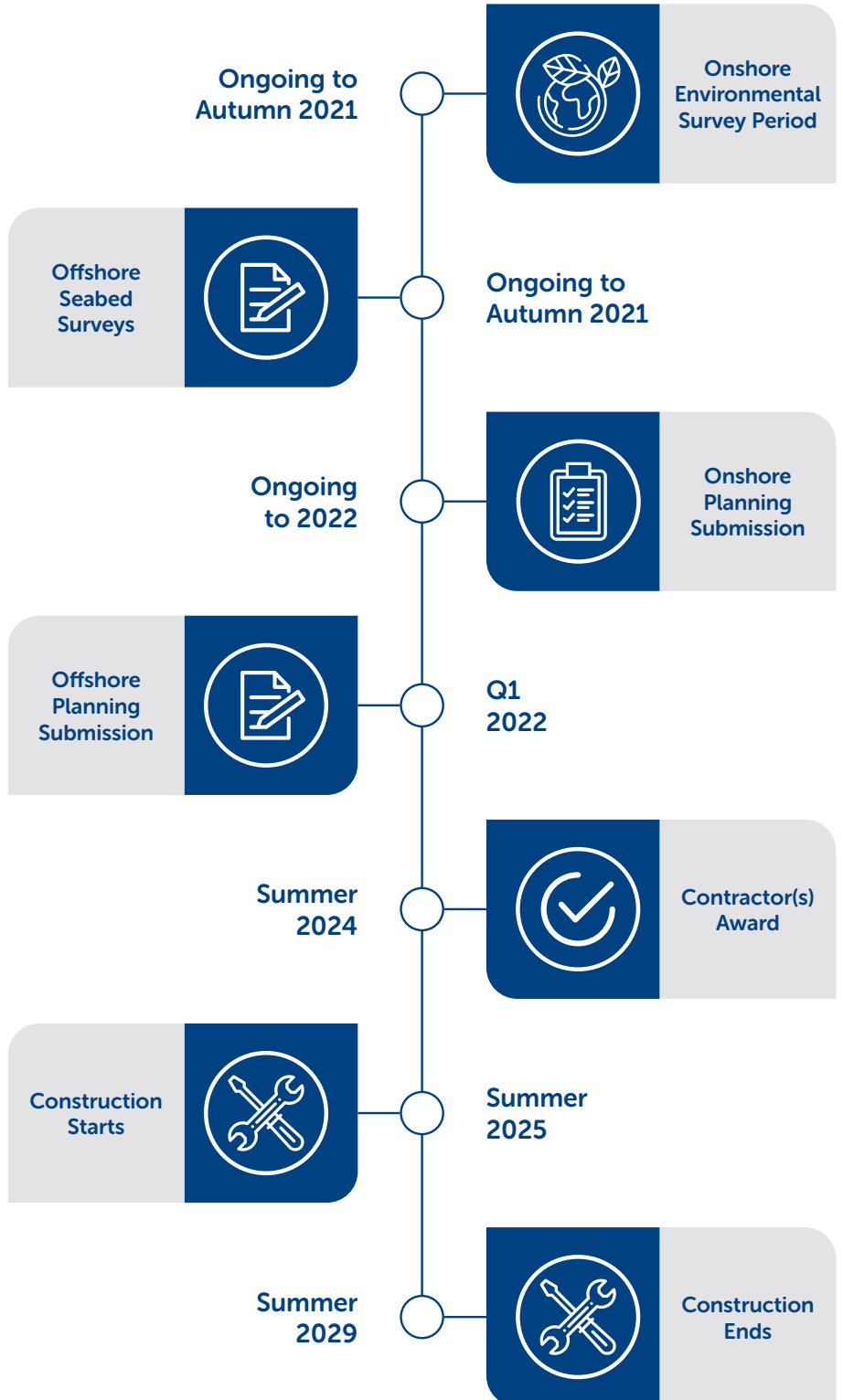
Project overview



The link between Peterhead in Aberdeenshire and Selby in North Yorkshire is needed for 2029 and will comprise:

- Approximately 440km of subsea cable between landfall sites in Aberdeenshire and East Riding of Yorkshire.
- Approximately 2km of onshore underground DC cable from the landfall near Peterhead to a new converter station nearby.
- New converter station at Boddam, Peterhead.
- Approximately 1km of underground AC cables between the new converter station and Peterhead 400kV substation.
- Enabling works at the Peterhead 400kV substation (currently under construction).

Project timeline



* Distances are approximate and will be refined as the detail of the proposed works is refined.

Project overview

Planning application

The proposed development is classed as “National Development” because it is a new converter station linking directly to high voltage electricity transmission lines (132kV and above).

A proposal of application notice (PAN) was submitted to Aberdeenshire Council on the 13th of May 2021 allowing for at least 12 weeks of pre-application consultation.

This public event forms part of the pre-application consultation and feedback received will be included in the Proposal of Application Consultation report which form an important part of the forthcoming planning application.

We are aiming to submit the planning application to Aberdeenshire Council within the first quarter of 2022. The PAN red line boundary shown on the literature will be rationalised and reduced in size prior to the submission of any planning application.

There will be a requirement to submit a variety of plans as well as environmental reports and assessments as part of any planning application.

There may be a requirement to make improvements to the road network, to facilitate construction traffic and abnormal load movements (i.e. transformer delivery) which will require agreement with Aberdeenshire Planning and Roads departments in advance of works commencing on site.

We are intending to submit our onshore planning application no later than the end of February 2022.

In addition to the proposed converter station, there are changes required to the overhead lines (OHL) and towers. These changes will be dealt with via a separate application under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989 which will be submitted to the Scottish Government’s Energy Consent Unit around the same time as the planning application.

It is worth noting that there will be a requirement to connect the converter station with the subsea cable at the landfall point. This part of the project will be installed using our Permitted Development Rights and as such no planning application will be submitted.

A planning application will be submitted to Marine Scotland and the MMO for the subsea cable. A separate public consultation will be undertaken by SSEN and National Grid to provide further details of the proposed offshore works.

Our proposed solution

Several converter station sites were initially identified, based on proximity to the existing electricity infrastructure, access requirements, and potential environmental constraints. The same converter station design and required size of site was used to allow a comparative assessment of the sites to be undertaken.

In October 2020 we presented our preferred site and asked for feedback on the two layouts within the site. This site was previously selected for development of the converter station when looked at in 2011/2012 and our follow up review of this process and additional site selection surveys, it was still deemed the preferable location.

We received valuable feedback from the responses to our consultation and since October we have adopted the following changes:

- We understand the concerns raised with the ‘East’ layout option being too close to the A90 road and we have developed the ‘West’ option which is further away.

We have now taken the changes into the design and the following scope of work is being consulted upon.

Converter station

The converter station will comprise of the following key components:

- Converter valves and controls
- Converter Building
- Converter Transformers
- Transformer Cooling
- DC smooth reactors
- Valve cooling banks
- AC Filters
- Associated electrical infrastructure
- Permanent access track.

A level platform shall be created to accommodate the electrical plant, structures, internal access and drainage to support operational requirements. As a result, it is anticipated that the construction of the platform will require considerable earthworks to achieve a cut and fill balance of material.

The main buildings within the construction compound will contain all main HV equipment. Secondary plants such as the valve cooling plant and control cabinet will be located in rooms equipped with climate control technology within the main buildings. The buildings are proposed to be steel portal frame with external cladding and will be of a maximum height of 30m.

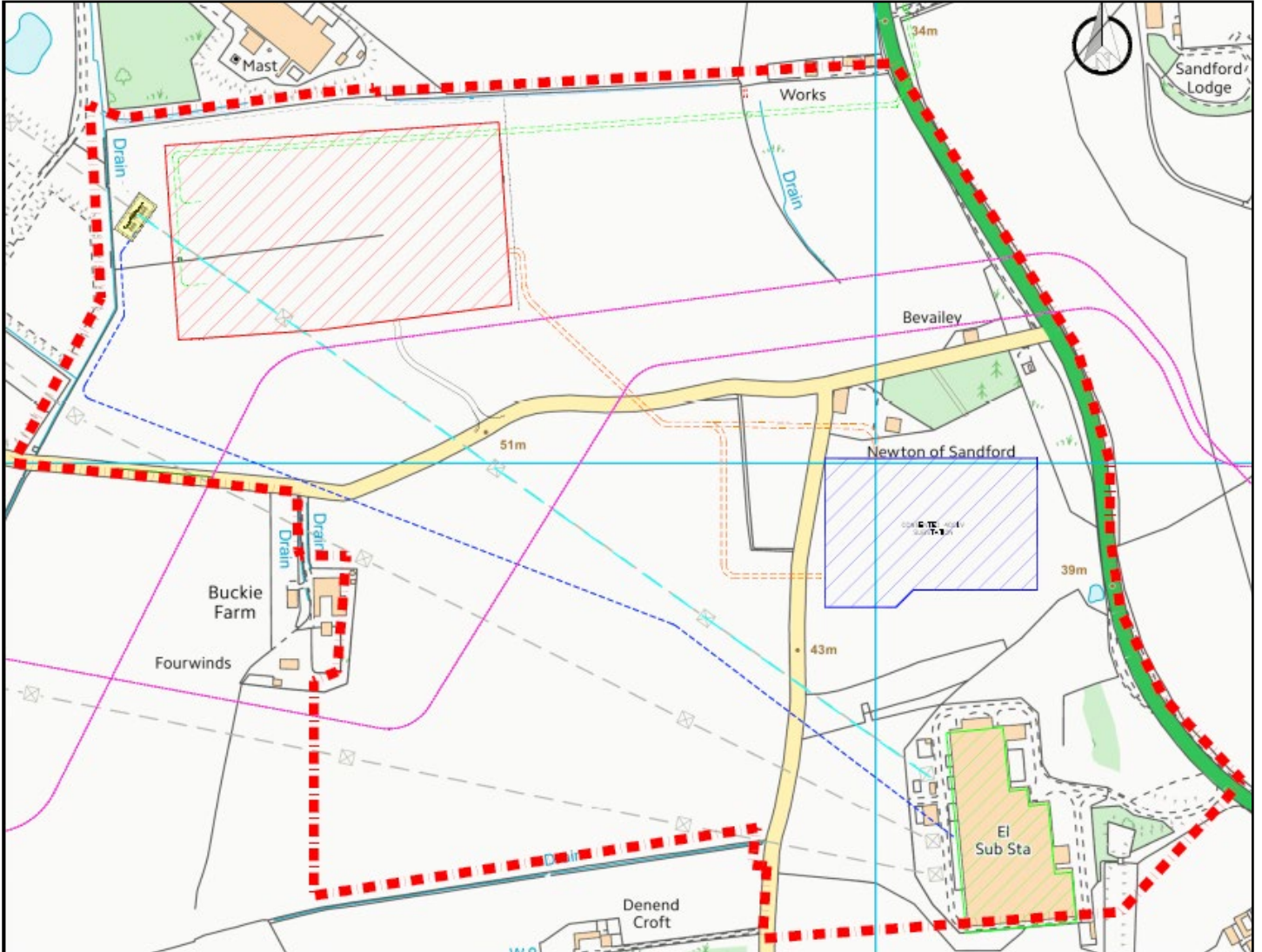
To facilitate the converter station, the project will require one of the existing overhead line towers to be undergrounded and a new sealing end platform installed. The overhead line works, including diversions shall be applied for under Section 37 of the Electricity Act (1989).

Underground cable connection works

The associated cable connection works for the Peterhead converter station will comprise the following:

- Approximately 440km of subsea cable between landfall sites in Aberdeenshire and East Riding of Yorkshire.
- Approximately 2km of onshore underground DC cable from the landfall near Peterhead to a new converter station nearby.
- Approximately 1km of underground AC cables between the new converter station and Peterhead substation.

Our proposed location



Key considerations

Landscape and visual

A landscape and visual impact appraisal (LVIA) is currently being undertaken. The LVIA will be one element that informs the final converter station design, as well as ensuring appropriate mitigation is incorporated. This can include designing an appropriate site level, using the existing landform features and creation of sympathetic landscaping, for example earth bunds and planting.

A detailed landscaping plan will be submitted as part of the planning application.

SSEN have committed to positively contribute to the UN and Scottish Government Biodiversity strategies by achieving an overall 'No Net Loss' on new infrastructure projects gaining consent in 2020 onwards and achieving Biodiversity Net Gain on projects gaining consent in 2025 onwards. Any planting will be designed to take this into account by considering use of native species to screen and enhance the site.

Laydown and office

Temporary offices, welfare and storage facilities for the main work force will be established during the planned construction period. These will be located in close proximity to the platform.

Transport, infrastructure and construction methods

Construction of the converter station will require plant and machinery, along with vehicles to transport materials and workers to the site. We anticipate that normal construction traffic will utilise the existing road infrastructure. However, we are undertaking investigations to confirm if improvements are required.

A construction traffic management plan shall be produced to outline and manage vehicle movements associated with the development.

The largest plant item to be delivered to the converter station will be the converter transformers. We are undertaking investigations along various routes to identify the most feasible Abnormal Indivisible Load (AIL) route.

Earthworks

Building the converter station platform will require significant volumes of graded stone. Our intention is to retain as much material on site as possible.

This would mean there would be a mass balance of material on site to minimise vehicle movements in the local area, however local sources of stone will be required as part of our development works for the platform design.

The volume of stone required, and vehicle movement numbers will be established during the detailed design stage.



This view includes the consented Peterhead 400kV Substation and associated infrastructure. Although not shown, this view would also include landscape mitigation for the 400kV substation and fewer overhead lines. Landscape mitigation for the proposed development would also be introduced.

Environmental

Detailed site surveys by specialists including ecologists, hydrologists and landscape architects, are currently underway and the information gained from these will be used to inform the environmental appraisal and subsequent identified mitigation that will be submitted as part of the application for consent.

The methods for these surveys and the detail included in the environmental appraisal will be agreed through ongoing consultation with Aberdeenshire Council and other statutory consultees, such as NatureScot (formerly Scottish Natural Heritage), to ensure a robust assessment of potential environmental impacts.

Habitats

There are no designated natural heritage sites located either within or close to the site. The converter station is located in a large, enclosed field used as pasture. Habitats at the site are otherwise generally composed of grassland.

Protected species

Surveys are being carried out currently to identify any signs of protected species at the site. There is limited habitat of interest for protected species at the site. However, we have established Species Protection Plans in agreement with NatureScot which will be implemented during the construction phase, supported by pre-construction surveys, designed to ensure any protected species in the area are accounted for and appropriate protective measures put in place such that harm and disturbance are avoided.

Ornithology

Previous bird surveys carried out across the site identified species typically found in farmlands and gardens, such as skylark and meadow pipit, along with several species of conservation importance, including yellowhammer and reed bunting.

Herring gull, a species characteristic of the Buchan Ness to Collieston Coast Special Protection Area (located approximately a kilometre north-east of the converter station), were also recorded near the site and likely breeding on nearby buildings. Bird surveys carried out recently for the proposed development identified a similar group of species across the site. The Species Protection Plans noted as part of Protected Species above would also be implemented to protect bird species across the site.

Soils and hydrology

There are no sites designated for water or geological interest located either within or close to the site. No private water supplies have been identified at the site, the nearest is some 400m west of the converter station, although previous studies identified the associated property to be fed by mains water supply.

The proposed site of the converter station is not deemed to be at risk of flooding; however, an appropriate site drainage plan for both the construction and operational phases will be developed to ensure no adverse impacts on the water environment. Measures will be included in the site design to ensure the proposed development does not impair surface or groundwater quality. No peat soil is present at the site and existing topsoil will be safeguarded.

Landscape and visual amenity

An assessment of potential landscape and visual effects is being conducted, following consultation with statutory consultees. This considers how the proposed development would be experienced within the landscape and seen from properties, routes and other vantage points in the surrounding area.

A landscaping plan will be developed to include measures to mitigate potential effects, including the use of planting and earthworks to screen or break up views of the converter station. The converter station would increase the extent of industrial infrastructure within the landscape which is characterised by other such features, including the nearby Peterhead Power Station and Peterhead substation. The proposed development is not considered to directly affect any designated or protected landscapes. Views of the proposed development would be experienced from nearby receptors in properties, on routes and potentially from local vantage points, and opportunities to mitigate significant effects will be explored through the assessment and landscape design process.

Cultural heritage

There are no designated cultural heritage sites present within the site. A number are however located in the wider area, including Den of Boddam Scheduled Monument, Buchanness Lighthouse, and Boddam Castle to the south and south-east. Most of the designated sites in the wider area are grouped around Peterhead harbour or along the shoreline in Boddam, within their respective conservation areas. Buildings and vegetation between these locations and the converter station site will screen views from most sites. Previous surveys across the site identified a small number of minor features of interest, such as two historic wells, at the north-west boundary, and the site of a former Royal Observer Corps post, next to the roadside along the southern boundary. There are no longer any surface traces of these features, but it is possible that some buried remains may survive. An archaeologist will monitor construction works, as required, to identify and record any new features discovered.

Noise

Noise from electrical infrastructure can cause a degree of noise disturbance to nearby residences and other sensitive receptors, particularly during the construction phase. A noise management plan would be utilised during construction to control for noise disturbance, including agreement of working hours with Aberdeenshire Council. An assessment of operational noise will also be conducted to determine the likely noise levels at nearby properties and design mitigation measures to keep noise below an acceptable level as agreed with Aberdeenshire Council.

Notes

What happens now, how do I have my say?

We understand and recognise the value of the feedback provided by members of the public during all engagements and consultations. Without this valuable feedback, the project development team would be unable to progress projects and reach a balanced proposal.

We are keen to receive your views and comments in regards to the following questions:

- Has the requirement for the project been clearly explained?
- Have we explained the approach taken to select the proposed site adequately?
- Are there any additional factors, or environmental features, that you consider important and should be brought to the attention of the project team?
- Do you have any other comments regarding the proposed converter station location and layout?
- Following review of the provided information, how would you describe your understanding of the Eastern HVDC project?
- Overall, how do you feel about the Eastern HVDC project?
- And finally, from your experience to date, can you rate the quality of consultation undertaken on the Eastern HVDC project?

Feedback can be submitted online via the project website or via the project Community Liaison Manager:

Dav Lynch
Community Liaison Manager



dav.s.lynch@sse.com



M: 07918404443



200 Dunkeld Road, Perth
PH1 3AQ



Additional Information

Information will also be made available via the project web page and social media channels:

Project Website:

www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/eastern-hvdc-link

Find us on Facebook:

SSEN Community

Follow us on Twitter:

@ssencommunity

Comments

Your views and comments can be provided to the project team by completing a feedback form or by writing to Dav Lynch, Community Liaison Manager.

We will be seeking feedback from the members of the public and Statutory Bodies 24th September 2021.

All received feedback will be assessed and the proposed options adapted where necessary.



Your Comments

Thank you for taking the time to attend this consultation event. In order to record your views and improve the effectiveness of our consultation, please complete this short feedback form.

Please complete in **BLOCK CAPITALS**. (Please tick one box per question only)

Q1 Has the requirement for the project been clearly explained?

Yes No

Q2 Have we explained the approach taken to select the proposed site adequately?

Yes No

Q3 Are there any additional factors, or environmental features, that you consider important and should be brought to the attention of the project team?

Q4 Do you have any other comments regarding the proposed converter station location and layout?

Q5 Following review of the provided information, how would you describe your understanding of the Eastern HVDC project?

Excellent Good Average Poor



Q6 Overall, how do you feel about the Eastern HVDC project?

Q7 And finally, from your experience to date, can you rate the quality of consultation undertaken on the Eastern HVDC project?

Excellent Good Average Poor

Full name

Address

Telephone

Email

If you would like to be kept informed of progress on the project please tick this box.

If you would like your comments to remain anonymous please tick this box.

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this feedback form.
Please submit your completed form by one of the methods below:**

Email: dav.s.lynch@sse.com

Online: www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/eastern-hvdc-link

Download: Comment forms and all the information from this consultation booklet will also be available to download from the project website.

Any information given on the feedback form can be used and published anonymously as part of Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks consultation report. By completing this feedback form you consent to Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks using feedback for this purpose.

Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks is a trading name of: Scottish and Southern Energy Power Distribution Limited Registered in Scotland No. SC213459; Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission plc Registered in Scotland No. SC213461; Scottish Hydro Electric Power Distribution plc Registered in Scotland No. SC213460; (all having their Registered Offices at Inveralmond House 200 Dunkeld Road Perth PH1 3AQ); and Southern Electric Power Distribution plc Registered in England & Wales No. 04094290 having its Registered Office at Number One Forbury Place, 43 Forbury Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 3JH which are members of the SSE Group.



APPENDIX 7: PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENT 1 (OCTOBER 2020) FEEDBACK FORMS

Consultee Type	Consultee	Date Received	Type of Consultation	Summary of Comments	Positive / Opposed / Neutral	SSE Responses
General Public & Landowners	Local Resident	23-Oct-20	Email	<p>I see no explanation on the requirement of the proposal in the brochure so it cannot be adequate.</p> <p>Drax is powered by polluting fuels (coal > wood pellets). It should be closed, not connected.</p>	Neutral	<p>1) In the transition of the UK economy to meet the UK's legally binding Net Zero targets, significant growth in the generation of renewable and low carbon electricity in Scotland must continue, particularly as we seek to decarbonise the transport industry and how we heat our homes. This new generation will continue to put pressure on the electricity networks that accommodate the north to south power flows between Scotland and England. As a result, it is necessary to identify and progress a timely reinforcement solution that will accommodate the growing volume of critically required renewable generation, safeguarding the continued reliability of the system, and minimising costs to consumers.</p> <p>Economic analysis, completed by the National Grid Electricity System Operator (ESO) through its Network Options Assessment (NOA) process, has consistently recommended the need for significant reinforcement across the Scotland and North of England region. This has led to the establishment of a joint Transmission Operator (TO) project team in early 2017 to progress the development of these reinforcements.</p> <p>A range of options was taken forward for further analysis, by the joint TO project team, from a list of conceptual options that could achieve increased north to south power transfers. These were assessed under criteria such as: technology readiness and suitability; boundary uplift capability; environmental and consent risk; delivery timescales; and capital cost.</p> <p>Based on the recommendations from the ESO economic analysis completed to date and the activities of the joint TO project team, the following options are being taken forward by the TOs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Peterhead to Drax HVDC (SHE Transmission & National Grid Electricity Transmission project) •Torness to Hawthorn Pit HVDC (National Grid Electricity Transmission & Scottish Power Transmission project) <p>2) Drax: Drax power station is connected to a "node" on the electricity transmission system that is called Drax 400kV substation. It is that substation into which it is proposed to connect the new HVDC circuit from Peterhead. The operation and future of Drax power station is a matter for the owners of Drax power station.</p>
General Public & Landowners	Local Resident	01-Nov-20	Feedback Form	<p>Not enough information provided on types and volumes of construction traffic we can expect, and any plans to deal with how it will integrate with the existing transport network both during construction and afterwards.</p> <p>Would like a better explanation of strategic reasons for transmission to areas of higher demand further south. Is this because England needs Scottish power sources to avoid having power stations built there or to boost renewables, &c?</p>	Neutral	<p>1) There is potential for travel disruption during construction, for example, when we take delivery of key plant items or because of increased volumes of traffic on the local road network. Disruption will be minimised and typically controlled through an agreed Traffic Management Plan as part of any consent conditions. We aim to ensure that construction traffic uses the roads safely and that any inconvenience to the public is kept to a minimum whilst maintaining a safe environment for the workforce and other road users.</p> <p>2) The transmission system is like the motorway network for electricity. It is the means by which electricity produced in one area is transported to where it is needed. It is up to the developers of generation projects whether they be wind, gas, nuclear or any other type of generation where in GB they seek to develop their generation projects. Through publication of the Electricity Transmission Ten Year Statement (ETYS), and zonal charges for use of the transmission system, the transmission companies signal the transmission impact of generation siting options which is information that is available to generation project developers to take into account in their decisions regarding where to site projects.</p>
General Public & Landowners	Local Resident	Not Known	Feedback Form	<p>This would be a boost for Peterhead for jobs and Peterhead power station working along with this for back up, giving the station more power and jobs.</p>	Positive	N/A

General Public & Landowners	Local Resident	05-Nov-20	Feedback Form	<p>The approach to Peterhead is terrible and to trash the approach even more by building next to the road and in full view of all is a crime. You have plenty land and the west side in over the natural slope of the land hence most of it will be out of sight and next to existing large factory buildings. If you build next to the road how can we ever get it dualled as you will be sitting on it give the people of Peterhead a break they will have to live with this for 50 years and get next to zero benefit as it is all for people who live hundreds of miles away. Stop trashing us who live here. You have hidden Boddam power station quite well for 50 years but moving earth costs money . Move it west or hide it like boddam behind an eath bank and plant some trees.</p> <p>You already have plans afoot to build a transformer station at the roadside. Please hide it for those coming to Peterhead. Keep it away from view. Go to the west endof the field. I note you have encircled the Newton Farm / Buckie Farm road, that is a public road are you planning to steal it or up grade it.</p> <p>think of us here who have to endure the shape of your buildings, keep them away from the main road and hide them, not do a cheap job and leave us with horrors. Whilst using this site. May I ask a question. As an executor of my late uncle's will. My uncle owned Hill of Sandford Farm which is joined by several fields fences as neighbours of SSE. As mail may go to that address can you direct it to me or our solicitors Masson & Glennie Peterhead. As an interested party being a neighbour he did receive from you notifications of your proposals. We would like to still receive</p>	Positive	<p>1) Following feedback on this consultation, the project team will now be developing the West Option for the converter station. This will hopefully alley your concerns regarding the visual impact nearer to the road.</p> <p>2) The public road you refer to will be upgraded to allow access into the converter station.</p> <p>3) Your details will be added to our stakeholder contact list for any future communications.</p>
General Public & Landowners	Local Resident	28-Oct-20	Feedback Form	The "west" option is best my opinion as it is furtherest from the main road and residential property	Positive	N/A
General Public & Landowners	Local Resident	26-Oct-20	Feedback Form	when will the details of the subsea cable position be online as I work lobster pots around Sandford Bay and Boddam	Positive	Details of the subsea cable route will be shared in summer 2021 following the Peterhead - Drax marine survey, that is due to begin in March/April 2021. SSE have employed Fisheries Liaison Officers who are due to be in contact with the local Peterhead fisheries groups before the end of this year to give further details.

APPENDIX 8: PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENT 2 (PAN EVENT) (AUGUST 2021) FEEDBACK FORMS

Status	Complete
Has the requirement for the project been clearly explained?	Yes
Have we explained the approach taken to select the proposed site adequately?	Yes
Are there any additional factors, or environmental features, that you consider important and should be brought to the attention of the project team?	A virtual exhibition does not give nearby residents the experience of what noise,sounds,and disrupting experiences one could expect over the next nine years.
Do you have any other comments regarding the proposed converter station location and layout?	Your plant / construction layout is only shown as a aerial view Surely a more accurate representation of this site as seen by the public should be a virtual 3D 360 view from above that then drops to ground level, as this is how most of us will view it on a daily basis as we all walk,drive, and cycle past it. It's bad enough that for 49 years the power station has been a ugly blot on our landscape, Any planting of trees ,shrubs, would be a wonderful site around this new project ,anything that can hide its hard industrial lines Would be fantastic
Following review of the provided information, how would you describe your understanding of the Eastern HVDC project?	Average
Overall, how do you feel about the Eastern HVDC project?	At this moment Aug 2021, no problem. But with nine years till end of project , feeling could change. Would rather like to view the surrounding area as a green belt area untouched, but if if projects like this must happen, it would be appreciated if heavy landscaping and tree planting can be done to hide the finished project
And finally, from your experience to date, can you rate the quality of consultation under taken on the Eastern HVDC project?	Good
Full name	Redacted
Address	Redacted
Telephone	
Email Address	Redacted
If you would like to be kept informed of progress on the project please tick the box below.	Yes
If you would like your comments to remain anonymous please tick the box below.	

Status	
Has the requirement for the project been clearly explained?	Yes
Have we explained the approach taken to select the proposed site adequately?	Yes
Are there any additional factors, or environmental features, that you consider important and should be brought to the attention of the project team?	No
Do you have any other comments regarding the proposed converter station location and layout?	No
Following review of the provided information, how would you describe your understanding of the Eastern HVDC project?	Excellent
Overall, how do you feel about the Eastern HVDC project?	
And finally, from your experience to date, can you rate the quality of consultation under taken on the Eastern HVDC project?	Excellent
Full name	Redacted
Address	Redacted
Telephone	n/a
Email Address	Redacted
If you would like to be kept informed of progress on the project please tick the box below.	TRUE
If you would like your comments to remain anonymous please tick the box below.	FALSE